

**Request for Proposals for the**

 **Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly**

**Workforce Success Grants for Healthcare Workforce Hubs**

***Funded through the***

***Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund***

***FY’20 Appropriation***

**Issued by**

**Commonwealth Corporation**

**RESPONSES DUE:** June 30, 2020 by 11:59 PM

Upload electronic submission to the following link:

<https://commcorp.tfaforms.net/328823>

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**Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund**

**FY’20 APPROPRIATION: HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE HUBS**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

[Section One: Overview of Grant Initiative Goals and Structure 3](#_Toc41640500)

[Section Two: Partnership Eligibility and Regional Planning / Capacity Building Requirements 7](#_Toc41640501)

[Section Three: Administrative Requirements 11](#_Toc41640502)

[Section Four: Available Funding & Allowable Costs 13](#_Toc41640503)

[Section Five: Submission Schedule & Instructions for Submission 14](#_Toc41640504)

[Section Six: Proposal Evaluation Process and Criteria 16](#_Toc41640505)

[Section Seven: Summary of Attachments 18](#_Toc41640506)

[Part 1: Proposal Summary Form 19](#_Toc41640507)

[Part 2: Partnership Narrative Form 21](#_Toc41640508)

[Part 3: Proposal Workplan 23](#_Toc41640509)

[Part 4a, 4b & 4c: Budget, Budget Narrative & Match Contribution Forms 24](#_Toc41640510)

[Part 5: Partnership Agreements 28](#_Toc41640511)

[Part 6: Certification 29](#_Toc41640512)

**Healthcare Workforce HUbs - REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Section One: Overview of Grant Initiative Goals and Structure

1. ***About the Funding Source:*** The Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) was established through economic stimulus legislation passed by the Massachusetts Legislature in 2006. The Massachusetts Legislature established the WCTF with two goals in mind:
* To improve the competitive stature of Massachusetts businesses by improving the skills of current and future workers, and
* To improve access to well-paying jobs and long-term career success for all Massachusetts residents, especially those who experience structural, social, and educational barriers to employment success.

The Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund invests in demand-driven programs designed by industry sector partnerships that train and place unemployed and underemployed workers. The purpose of the Fund is to support the development and implementation of employer and worker-responsive programs to enhance worker skills, incomes, productivity, and retention, and to increase the quality and competitiveness of Massachusetts businesses. WCTF programs serve people across the Commonwealth whose life experiences and circumstances make it difficult for them to succeed in employment without targeted support. They include individuals who are underemployed and rely on aid from public benefits to support their families, individuals who have been disconnected from the workforce for a long period, and people who have not been able to complete formal schooling. Other participants may face barriers to work due in part to not speaking English as their first language, past involvement with the criminal justice system, or health problems such as a disability or substance use history.

This grant initiative is funded through an appropriation in the Fiscal Year 2020 State Budget (line item 7002-1075). The grant initiative is funded by the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund and administered by Commonwealth Corporation on behalf of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. In 2018, the Massachusetts Legislature voted to rename grant awards from the WCTF in memory of the late Senator Kenneth Donnelly, who was a steadfast champion of promoting workforce opportunities in the Commonwealth, especially for people who might lack a pathway to economic stability. These grants may be referred to as “Donnelly Grants” or “Workforce Success Grants.”

In this spirit, we seek to foster sector partnerships that are powered by local organizations who possess deep expertise and aim to uplift people of all backgrounds. The WCTF model enables community organizations to build and sustain effective partnerships with employer partners and the public workforce system while striving to incorporate more equitable and innovative practices that lead to increased economic mobility for more people in the Commonwealth.

1. ***About the Grant Initiative Goals:*** *The Healthcare Workforce Hub Initiative* is designed to support regional coordination that results in additional **training and placement/advancement program** capacity and to fund **capacity building and planning** efforts to ensure workforce system-wide alignment. In addition to funding training and employment outcome-related activities, initial grant awards are intended to be used for staffing to develop capacity and address issues within targeted occupational clusters in a regional context. As one of the Commonwealth’s largest industries, the healthcare sector is poised for continued evolution as it pivots to adapt to emerging needs in a post-COVID-19 reality while also addressing pre-existing, persistence labor shortages in a range of occupations. Furthermore, while many jobs require at least a two-year college degree, there are viable pathways to higher wages and stable careers that can be completed in a shorter time frame and for lower costs. We have seen and funded numerous successful education and training programs over the recent years; however, we also recognize that truly moving the needle will require regional and state-wide coordination to realize the full potential of existing opportunities while also seeding strategic partnerships that foster innovations and alignment among employers, educational institutions, community-based organizations, and the workforce development system.

Commonwealth Corporation seeks to fund proposals from qualified regional partnerships, led by a MassHire Workforce Board, that will work collaboratively to meet existing and emerging healthcare workforce challenges. Through these grant funds, partnerships will be able to:

* Develop or support existing regional partnerships among employers, post-secondary education institutions, community-based organizations, the workforce development system, and community-based organizations that will continue beyond the life of the grant, with the potential of receiving additional funding in future years,
* Explore current landscape of healthcare workforce demand and training capacity,
* Complete strategic design work aimed to improve the alignment and acceleration of healthcare workforce pathways that lead to industry-recognized credentials,
* Enroll and graduate participants from healthcare certificate programs in occupations with high regional demand,
* Place graduates of these certificate programs in targeted healthcare jobs, and
* Support successful retention and advancement of targeted healthcare employees.

To accomplish these goals, we envision a multi-phased process for allocating funds to advance a diverse set of activities:

1. **Phase One - *Regional Planning / Capacity Building Activities* (up to six months):**
	1. **Application Process:** lead applicants submit a proposal in the form of narrative forms, budget and other required documentation outlined within this RFP for review. Application materials emphasize upfront planning and initial capacity building.
	2. **Maximum Award:** applicants may request up to $25,000 for the initial six months of planning and capacity building activities. Any funding that remains unspent from phase one may be reallocated to phase two.
	3. **Activities and Deliverables**: applications may propose to conduct regional planning, capacity building or other system change activities designed to improve placement, advancement, and retention outcomes for the region’s residents in the program target occupation(s) or in other occupations within the healthcare sector. We anticipate these activities may vary across regions and may include but are not limited to supporting staff capacity, understanding employer demand, understanding target population skills, interests, and assets, exploring licensure requirements and policies, transitioning to digitally enabled / hybrid instructional delivery models, and coordinating responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, etc. At the conclusion of phase one, and no later than six months post initial contract start date, regional partnerships will be asked to submit an implementation plan in order to receive funding for phase two. In addition to a strategic plan for sustaining partnership development and capacity building activities, we expect that the implementation plan will incorporate a fully formed plan for the delivery of at least one training and employment program.
2. **Phase Two – *Partnership Management and Program Implementation* (up to 2 ½ years):**
	1. **Application Process:** award decisions will be made based on ongoing discussions and regional planning work during phase one in tandem with the final implementation plan to be submitted between months three and six of phase one.
	2. **Maximum Award:** regional blueprint partnerships consisting of more than one MassHire Workforce Board may request up to an additional $375,000, for a total grant award of $400,000. Regional blueprint partnerships consisting of a single MassHire Workforce Board may request up to $225,000 in addition funding, for a total grant award of $250,000. All phase two contract periods will be made for a period of approximately 2-2.5 years.
	3. **Activities and Deliverables:** among the allowable activities, partnerships must propose to allocate funding to one of the following options:
		1. the delivery of cohort-based, occupationally focused training and placement programs to unemployed and/or underemployed individuals~~,~~ with a goal to place them in unsubsidized employment in the target occupation upon completion of training.
		2. the delivery of cohort-based, occupationally focused training and advancement programs to underemployed workers currently working in the target sector with a goal of providing opportunities for entry-level workers to advance to a new job (upward or lateral movement) within their current employer that is full-time and provides wage growth and career growth.

Partnerships will be able to propose using a portion of Phase Two funding allocations for the continued management of more robust regional partnerships and related planning activities.

1. ***Target Populations:*** Grant funds may be used to support the development and delivery of workforce training programs intended to serve Massachusetts residents who are unemployed or underemployed and in need of skill enhancement to succeed in a healthcare career as well as other related work within the Healthcare sector. Please see Section Four for more information.
2. ***Funding Availability*: ~**$2.5 million is available for this grant program. The 16 MassHire Workforce Boards are able to apply as a partnership that is in accordance with the 7 workforce planning regions outlined by the [**Regional Workforce Skills Planning Initiative regional blueprint process**](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/view-your-regions-blueprint) (*“Blueprint Regions”*). Each of the seven MassHire blueprint regions are eligible for one grant award. Please see Section Two for more information.
3. ***Match Requirement*:** Awardees will be required to provide a 30% match of total awarded funds. Match contributions may be cash or in-kind. Please see Section Four and Seven for more information.
4. ***Duration of Contract(s)*:** Initial Phase One contracts will be issued for a maximum duration of up to six months. Phase Two awards may be made for up to an additional 2.5 years unless otherwise agreed upon during contract negotiations, pending availability of funding.
5. ***Payment:*** Funds will be disbursed on a cost-reimbursement basis. We anticipate that lead applicants for each partnership will submit one invoice each month using the required invoice template provided by Commonwealth Corporation. Partnerships will only be reimbursed for expenses incurred during the period of the contract. Lead applicants for each partnership will be required to maintain and submit, upon request, back-up documentation for expenses and match contributions.
6. ***Application Deadline*:** Applications are due on June 30, 2020 by 11:59 PM. We do not require a letter of intent to apply; however, we do encourage interested parties to sign-up for our Q&A list in order to be notified of relevant updates and clarifications. Questions about this RFP will be accepted via email to Anthony Britt at abritt@commcorp.org from the release date through June 22, 2020. Please see Section Six for more information.
7. ***Schedule:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Date** |
| Request for Proposals Released | May 29, 2020 |
| Deadline to Submit Written Questions | June 22, 2020 |
| All Answers to Questions Posted Online | June 23, 2020 |
| Responses (Proposals) Due | June 30, 2020 by 11:59 PM |
| Applicants Notified of Status (Anticipated) | August 2020 |
| Anticipated Contract Start Date | August 2020 (tentative) |
| Anticipated Contract End Date | Phase One: Six Months Post Contract Start DatePhase Two: June 2023 (tentative) |

Section Two: Partnership Eligibility and Regional Planning / Capacity Building Requirements

1. ***Purpose*:** Applicants are eligible to apply for up to $25,000 to conduct regional planning, capacity building or other system change activities designed to improve placement, advancement, and retention outcomes for the region’s residents within the healthcare sector. The lead MassHire Workforce Board will be responsible for coordinating with regional partners to carry out capacity building work to ensure regional and systemwide alignment as well as preparing to provide training and placement/advancement programs in the future. We have outlined these criteria in order to facilitate statewide alignment with the [**Regional Workforce Skills Planning Initiative regional blueprint process**](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/view-your-regions-blueprint) and the collaborative efforts of Governor Baker’s Workforce Skills Cabinet.[[1]](#footnote-1)
2. ***Eligible Lead Applicants*:** Because this initiative seeks to facilitate the development of sustainable partnerships and strengthen the leadership role of regional Workforce Boards (WBs), submissions are invited from broad-based partnerships with WBs as the leads. Therefore, the lead applicant for a qualifying partnership must bea MassHire Workforce Board on behalf of their assigned region in the Regional Workforce Skills Planning Initiative regional blueprint process. Only one application is permitted per region.*An organization may not be the lead applicant for more than one application.*
3. ***Lead Applicant Responsibilities:*** Lead applicants must:
* Have a commitment to work collaboratively with regional partners and Commonwealth Corporation to ensure capacity building benchmarks are met and that funded programs in the future meet participants’ needs and achieves planned outcomes.
* Convene regional partners to achieve the overall project goals, including, but not limited to, coordinating partnership development, developing an appropriate budget for all activities, negotiating agreement of accountability and performance management measures, developing and overseeing the effective implementation of the training program and coordinating related program activities.
* Collect and report all required data and participate in the overall evaluation of the programs.
* Have operational and fiscal capacity to manage public funds.
1. ***Required Partners:*** partnerships **must include** all the [**MassHire Workforce Boards**](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/connect-with-your-local-masshire-workforce-board) in a given blueprint region, inclusive of their respective [**career centers**](https://www.mass.gov/how-to/find-a-masshire-career-center)**.** Local workforce boards should be engaged in a capacity that complements the overall structure and strategy of the proposed programs and partnership structure. **This must be demonstrated by using the MOA to include these activities or through the submission of separate letters of commitment.** We do not mandate a specific format; however, the strongest applications will include clear commitments, outline roles and responsibilities, and articulate a shared stake in the success of the program among partners. We are looking for meaningful language that is tailored to the details of the proposal and includes a sufficient level of detail as opposed to a generalizable statement.
2. ***Additional Partnership Members:*** Applicants will be asked to describe existing working relationships with healthcare employers in their region; however, **additional MOAs are not required to receive Phase One funding**. During Phase One, awardees will be able to identify additional employer and community partners that are critical to the healthcare sector and to the success of their target populations. In order to received Phase Two funding, awardees will need to clearly demonstrate their organization’s core competencies and identify areas in which they may leverage relationships with other organizations in their community or region in order to strengthen their programming and/or achieve regional efficiencies of scale. Examples of such partners include, but are not limited to, local service offices of public agencies, healthcare employer associations, labor organizations, institutions of higher education and vocational technical education institutions, housing agencies, and non-profit education, training or other service providers.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Blueprint Planning Region** | **MassHire Workforce Board Regions** |
| **Northeast** | * Greater Lowell
* Merrimack Valley
* North Shore
 |
| **Greater Boston** | * Boston
* Metro North
* Metro South/West
 |
| **Southeast** | * Bristol
* Brockton Area
* Greater New Bedford
* South Shore
 |
| **Cape & Islands** | * Cape Cod and Islands
 |
| **Central** | * Central Region
* North Central
 |
| **Pioneer Valley** | * Franklin/ Hampshire
* Hampden
 |
| **Berkshire** | * Berkshire
 |

1. ***Proposal Requirements:*** Commonwealth Corporation understands that organizations and regions are at different stages in the development of sector-based strategies and programming to address current and emerging workforce challenges. For this reason, we will be looking for applicants to articulate how a strategy that incorporates regional planning and capacity building resources might contribute to improving multiple aspects of their workforce system. Applicants must submit a detailed work plan and provide a reasonable case for their collective ability to attain the overall goals of this funding opportunity through their proposed Phase One activities.

The ideal partnership will:

* Facilitate closer working relationships among the partners, and establish clear roles and responsibilities
* Develop or build upon mechanisms for regional information sharing and strategic workforce planning, based on identification of regional labor market supply and demand
* Involve employers in sharing real-time vacancy information, crafting appropriate education and training programs and assessments, and placing trainees in jobs
* Engage employers in program design extensively enough that they can see graduates of the program as one of their primary pipelines for new entrants to their workforce
* Work toward a longer-term vision for regional workforce development beyond the implementation of a single specific project
* Serve as a model for regional workforce development that can be applied to other sectors while also learning from existing sector partnership models

Partnerships may focus their design work on one or more areas, including but not limited to the following:

* Working with local partners to identify and developing adult pipeline and/or incumbent program pathways
* Improving recruitment strategies especially for traditionally underserved populations
* Developing referral strategies for participants not eligible for the proposed training programs
* Developing pre-training programs that prepare individuals for entry into existing programs with demonstrated past success as measured by certification, graduation and placement rates
* Developing training programs that provide advancement opportunities within the proposed occupational training program’s target occupation(s)
* Providing professional development opportunities for staff and partners with an emphasis on remote learning and support options
* Identifying and/or creating stackable credentials
* Developing innovative responses to sector-based education, training, and employment programs in the post-pandemic “new normal” such as community resiliency and interactions between unsubsidized employment and public assistance
* Incorporating digitally enabled and/or tech-based solutions to existing or emerging workforce challenges
* Aligning coursework and certificates from one level to the next so that prior coursework, certificates, and/or work experience counts toward an Associate’s Degree
* Building in stepping-out points within a degree program at which students can obtain a certification leading to employment and then work while continuing their education toward the next certification or degree
* Offering flexible scheduling alternatives that accommodate working students and allow for multiple starting points during the year
* Integrating occupational and academic content
* Accelerating the transition to credit-bearing coursework for students placed in developmental classes

Section Three: Administrative Requirements

1. ***Participant Level Data Reporting Requirements*:** Grantees will be required to collect and provide regional, programmatic, and participant-level data at different points through partnership development and program implementation. Upon initial grant award, Commonwealth Corporation will provide additional guidance regarding the types of data collection and forms required (e.g. participant demographics, selection/enrollment, completion, and employment data, etc.). Commonwealth Corporation takes data security very seriously and will not provide any party with the names of any participants or any other information that may be used to identify a participant unless the participant has provided prior permission.
2. ***Program Progress Reporting Requirements:*** during Phase One, grantees will be required to submit the following narrative reports using templates supplied by Commonwealth Corporation:

Periodic Progress Reports: These reports will be due at least quarterly and will include updates on partnership development, training timelines, and other relevant reflections on grant activities, inclusive of successes and challenges. The format for this report will be provided to grantees after a contract is awarded.

Final Activity Report: This report will be submitted at the end of the contract period and will document what was achieved through the investment of these funds, inform future funding practices and provide information that could be used more generally among organizations doing similar work. The format for this report will be provided to grantees after a contract is awarded.

Additional reporting requirements for training program implementation will be shared prior to the start of Phase Two.

Please note that Commonwealth Corporation is required to submit an annual report to the legislature providing results of the grants made through the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund. Commonwealth Corporation will provide the legislature with grantee specific information and will use data from the database and information from the narrative reports as a primary source.

1. ***Program & Fiscal Monitoring:*** Commonwealth Corporation is responsible for ensuring that organizations receiving grant funds:
2. have the fiscal and program systems needed to meet all relevant federal and state requirements;
3. meet the terms of the grant award outlined in the contract with Commonwealth Corporation;
4. provide quality services to program participants; and
5. expend grant funds only for allowable activities.

To fulfill this responsibility, Commonwealth Corporation will periodically request and review documentation related to the grantee organization and grant expenses and activities. We anticipate conducting at least one in-person fiscal review over the duration of the grant period. Additional information will be provided after a contract is awarded.

1. ***Technical Assistance:*** Each grantee will be assigned a Commonwealth Corporation Program Manager and must assign a main point of contact at their organization who is accountable for the grant. The Commonwealth Corporation Program Manager will be available to support grantees through the duration of the grant, answering questions about operational issues as well as providing technical assistance to ensure grantees meet their performance outcomes.
2. ***Payment:*** Funds will be disbursed on a cost reimbursement basis. Grantees will be required to submit invoices on a monthly basis using an invoice template supplied by Commonwealth Corporation. Grantees will only be reimbursed for expenses incurred during the period of the contract. Grantees are required to maintain and submit, upon request, back-up documentation for expenses and match contributions.
3. ***Project Terms and Conditions*:**  Grantees will be required to abide by Commonwealth Corporation’s Standard Contract Terms and Conditions, which will be provided during contract negotiation. Applicants may review these terms and conditions prior to submitting an application by contacting Anthony Britt at abritt@commcorp.org to request a copy. In addition, all final contracts are subject to negotiation of a final statement of work.
4. ***Deliverables and Ownership:*** Grantees agree to license or otherwise make available to Commonwealth Corporation in perpetuity, without charge, all materials prepared and/or produced in whole or in part with these funds, for Commonwealth Corporation’s use and dissemination.
5. ***Equipment:*** It is anticipated that partnerships will utilize Phase One to assess existing regional capacity to deliver training programs, including understanding how existing equipment can be used to provide in-person and remote training to participants (e.g. hands-on experiences). If equipment required to continue or increase seat capacity is not available in a region, applicants may make a case to use grant funds for such purchases in Phase One. A good case would include inventory of current capacity and an analysis of the gap between current capacity and the capacity needed to meet projected program goals in the future.

Section Four: Available Funding & Allowable Costs

1. ***Funding Availability & Grant Award Amount:*** $2.5 million is available for this grant program. Lead applicants may request up to $25,000 for the initial six months of planning and capacity building activities (Phase One). Any funding that remains unspent from phase one may be reallocated to Phase Two. Phase One contracts will be issued for up to six months and Phase Two contracts will be issued for up to 2.5 years additionally.
2. ***Matching Funds:*** Awardees will be required to provide a 30% match of total awarded funds. Match may include:
* Staff time to support the program
* Rent and associated operating costs not charged to the grant
* Other expenses related to program implementation
1. ***Allowable Costs:***  Funds may be used for costs associated with program design, regional partnership planning, and capacity building or systems change activities. Please refer to Section 2F for a detailed list of potential activities. During Phase Two, funds will be made available for the delivery of education and training activities, and/or other services to prepare participants for success in the targeted occupation(s), to optimize opportunities for participant learning and career development, and to help to achieve placement for participants.

 *Phase Two* fund allocations may include:

* Staff time for partnership and program coordination, job development, case management and data entry
* Outreach, recruitment, assessment and selection
* Support services needed to ensure participants’ success, such as transportation, childcare, uniforms and tools, including flexible funding to address individual barriers to program or job retention that may not be uniform nor predictable in nature, such as car repairs or verifiable emergencies
* Training delivery, including classroom, online and formal on-the-job training
* Stipends for participating in training and work experience
* Costs of licenses associated with delivery of digitally enabled training
* Additional funds for marketing and research and evaluation

Section Five: Submission Schedule & Instructions for Submission

1. ***Submission Schedule:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Date** |
| Request for Proposals Released | May 29, 2020 |
| Deadline to Submit Written Questions | June 22, 2020 |
| All Answers to Questions Posted Online | June 23, 2020 |
| Responses (Proposals) Due | June 30, 2020 by 11:59 PM |
| Applicants Notified of Status (Anticipated) | August 2020 |
| Anticipated Contract Start Date | August 2020 (tentative) |
| Anticipated Contract End Date | Phase One: Six Months Post Contract Start DatePhase Two: June 2023 (tentative) |

1. ***Clarification Period*:** Questions about this grant program will be accepted in writing from the release date through June 22, 2020 at 5:00 PM. Please submit all questions via email to Anthony Britt at abritt@commcorp.org. All questions will be responded to and posted on Commonwealth Corporation’s website at [www.commcorp.org](http://www.commcorp.org) by the specified date. Applicants can sign up at the following link to receive email notifications when new responses are posted: <https://commcorp.tfaforms.net/328825>. However, all potential applicants and interested parties are advised to check the Commonwealth Corporation’s website periodically for additional information and updates until proposal submissions are due.
2. ***Application*** ***Submission Instructions*:** Grant Applications are due in an electronic format no later than 11:59 PM on Tuesday, June 30, 2020. Please upload your submission electronically to the following link: <https://commcorp.tfaforms.net/328823>. In order to upload your submission, you will need to complete an online form that provides the following information: (1) the **Name** of the lead applicant organization, (2) the lead applicant organization’s **Federal Employer ID Number**, (3) the lead applicant organization’s **Department of Unemployment Assistance ID Number**, (4) the **Total Phase One Planning Funds Requested**, and (5) the lead applicant organization’s **Primary Contact Information** (to be notified upon decision of grant award). Additional information from your narrative summary may be requested to be uploaded in an online format.

Applicants should review all components prior to uploading in order to ensure they have completed all the required information. Should you encounter any submission issues, please contact Anthony Britt at abritt@commcorp.org or 617-717-6909.

* Narrative forms must be submitted in MS Word file format.
* Budgets must be submitted in MS Excel file format.
* Signed MOAs or letters of commitment must be scanned and submitted in the form of a single PDF file.
1. ***Grant Application Package:*** The following parts make up the required components of the Grant Application Package. Failure to provide any of the documents or materials listed below may result in the disqualification of the application. Do not change the order of the questions/sections. You may adjust the spacing in each section to accommodate your answers. Do not use a font size smaller than size 11 nor margins less than one inch.

**Part 1: Application Summary Form**

This form provides Commonwealth Corporation with summary level information about the proposed program. You may adjust the spacing as needed to accommodate your answers. This form should be the title page of your Grant Application Package.

**Part 2: Partnership Narrative Form**

This form provides a list of questions that you must address in your application. Answer all the questions included on the Narrative Form. The page limit for the Narrative Form is 5 pages.

**Part 3: Application Workplan**

This form provides a template for sharing information on prospective planning opportunities.

You may add rows as necessary.

**Part 4: Budget & Budget Narrative Forms**

Part 4a, 4b & 4c are the Budget, Budget Narrative and Match Contribution Forms. These are included as a separate MS Excel Workbook labeled “Healthcare Hubs FY20 Phase One Budget Forms.” You must submit a detailed budget request using the provided forms. The budget will also become the financial basis for any grant award, and for making cost reimbursement payments over the course of the project. Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to modify application budgets prior to and/or after grant award.

**Part 5: Partnership Agreements - Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) / Letters of Commitment**

Each partner’s commitments, roles and anticipated activities must be provided either through a jointly signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among partners or through the submission of separate letters of commitment. Applicants should indicate specific partner roles and responsibilities. This component pertains to all partnership members in addition to the required MassHire partners.

**Part 6: Certification**

Must be attested to online by an individual who has signatory authority for the lead applicant upon submission.

Section Six: Proposal Evaluation Process and Criteria

1. ***Proposal Evaluation Process***: Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation will be reviewed by Commonwealth Corporation. Representatives of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and other state agency partners may participate in this process.

 The review process will consist of the following steps:

**Step 1: Threshold Criteria Screening**

Submissions will be screened for completeness, conformity to the program requirements, good standing, and timeliness of response. Submissions that are incomplete, non-conforming, or late may not be considered.

**Step 2:** **Compliance Screening**

Commonwealth Corporation will conduct an analysis to ensure all lead applicants are in compliance with state and federal law. Lead applicants are encouraged to review these criteria and ensure they are in compliance prior to submitting an application. Commonwealth Corporation will conduct the following reviews to ensure compliance prior to the awarding of any grants:

* Ensure applicant is in full compliance with all obligations to the Department of Unemployment Assistance, Department of Industrial Accidents, and any other obligations to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Commonwealth Corporation will work with the Department of Unemployment Assistance to conduct this review.

**Step 3: Review Committee**

A review committee will review and score all eligible submissions. Review results will be documented. Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to request additional information from any applicant to ensure that the review committee has a complete understanding of the proposed program and applicant qualifications.

**Phase One: Planning and Capacity Building Activities:** Requests for Planning and Capacity Building Activities funds will be reviewed and scored based on the following criteria:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Point value** |
| A. Track record of success and qualifications/capacity of applicant and partners with grant management, fiscal coordination, and implementation of proposed activities | 25 |
| B. Clear statement of relevance to healthcare labor market and workforce strategies such as training programs and clear alignment to regional planning process | 25 |
| C. Work Plan with specific activities, timelines, roles and responsibilities clearly outlined | 40 |
| D. Budget that is accurate and consistent with the proposed description of need and work plan  | 10 |

***Please note:*** Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to consider the applicant’s past performance in operating grants administered by Commonwealth Corporation and factor this performance into funding decisions.

**Step 4: Notification of Grant Award Status**

All applicants will be notified of their award status by email.

1. ***Additional Evaluation Notes:*** In addition to the scoring system outlined,Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to only consider submissions that, in our sole judgment, are complete and responsive to the solicitation’s requirements and include all required application components. Additionally, Commonwealth Corporation and the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development reserve the right to consider other criteria in making competitive awards among comparably qualified applicants. Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to reject any and all applications, or to accept any and all applications, in whole or in part, if deemed to be in the interest of the Commonwealth Corporation or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to do so. This RFP does not commit Commonwealth Corporation to award any contracts. Upon submission, all applications become the property of Commonwealth Corporation. Commonwealth Corporation is not responsible for electronic submissions that are not received by Commonwealth Corporation. We reserve the right to use sources of funding other than the WCTF FY’20 Appropriation to support proposals submitted in response to this solicitation. If applicants propose to use other funding sources to support the implementation of the proposed program, Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to consult with the other funders to ensure appropriate alignment of resources.

*Given the ongoing impact of COVID-19, Commonwealth Corporation reserves the right to adjust funding levels and timelines in order to be consistent with statewide guidance from the Baker-Polito Administration.*

1. ***Appeals:*** Appeals of the funding decision may be filed with Christine Abrams, President/CEO, Commonwealth Corporation, (2 Oliver Street, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02109) via email cabrams@commcorp.org. Appeals must be filed within fifteen (15) days of the date of Commonwealth Corporation’s notice to unsuccessful bidders. The President may decide to hold an informal review of the decision, and may decide to grant an appeal, deny an appeal, or modify an award based on information provided during the informal review.
2. ***Audited Financial Statements and Verification of Fiscal Management Capacity****:* All applicants that are selected for an award will be required to submit a copy of the organization’s most recent audited financial statement prior to the execution of a final contract.In addition, prior to the grant award, Commonwealth Corporation staff may review an organization’s fiscal systems and internal controls to verify that the organization has the capacity to manage public grant funds and administer the program.
3. ***Project Terms and Conditions*:** Grantees will be required to abide by Commonwealth Corporation’s Standard Contract Terms and Conditions, which will be provided during contract negotiation. Applicants may review these terms and conditions prior to submitting an application by contacting Anthony Britt at abritt@commcorp.org to request a copy. In addition, all final contracts are subject to negotiation of a final statement of work.

Section Seven: Summary of Attachments

**GRANT APPLICATION PACKAGE:**

The following attachments must be completed and submitted by all lead applicants:

* Part 1: Application Summary Form
* Part 2: Partnership Narrative Form
* Part 3: Partnership Workplan Form
* Part 4a, 4b & 4c: Phase One Budget, Budget Narrative and Match Narrative Forms
* Part 5: Partnership Agreements
* Part 6: Certification

Part 1: Proposal Summary Form

Please complete each question on the Program Profile and Contact Information forms. You may adjust the spacing in this section to accommodate your answers. Do not delete any of the questions. There is no page limit for Part 1, but we ask that you limit responses only to what is necessary to answer each question sufficiently.

*Please note: This symbol* **^** *identifies information which you will also need to enter on the online submission form (see Section 5C Submission Instructions).*

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| **1. PARTNERSHIP PROFILE** |
| **Name of Lead Applicant Organization ^:** |  |
| **Department of Unemployment Assistance ID Number ^:**  |  | **Federal Employer ID Number (FEIN) ^:** |  |
| **Name of Regional Partnership^:** |  |  |
| **Applicant Type^:** *Please select (⌧) the blueprint region represented by the lead MassHire Workforce Board.* | [ ]  Northeast[ ]  Greater Boston[ ]  Southeast[ ]  Cape & Islands | [ ]  Central[ ]  Pioneer Valley[ ]  Berkshire |
| **Preferred Contract Start Date^:** *(to help us plan, but will not be confirmed until awards are made)* | [ ]  ASAP[ ]  August 1, 2020[ ]  September 1, 2020 | **Preferred Contract End Date^:** *(to help us plan. Will not be confirmed until awards are made)* | [ ]  Nov 30, 2020[ ]  Dec 31, 2020[ ]  Jan 31, 2021 |
| **Total Phase One Capacity Building Funds Requested ^:** *(up to maximum $25,000)* | **$** | **Total Phase One Match Contribution^:** *(must be at least 30% of grant award request)* |  |
| **2. PARTNERSHIP PROPOSAL SUMMARY***In the space provided below, please provide a brief description of your application proposal in* ***400 words or fewer****.* *Please keep in mind that if your organization is awarded funding, this is the program summary that will be used in public announcements.* |
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| **3. LEAD APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION** |
| **Role** | **Name and Title** | **Address** | **Phone** | **Email** |
| **Primary Contact Person^:** (notified upon decision of grant award) |  |  |  |  |
| **Authorized Signatory^:** (authorized to commit organization) |  |  |  |  |
| **Fiscal Contact^:**(fiscally responsible for project funds and submitting invoices) |  |  |  |  |
| **Project Manager^:***(if known -* contact over the course of the project) |  |  |  |  |

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| **4. PHASE ONE PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS AND CONTACT INFORMATION***Please list the organizations and contact information for all required\* and additional partners.* *\*All required partners listed below must be included on a MOA or on a signed letter unless otherwise noted.* *You may add rows as needed to represent your partnership.*  |
| **Organization Type** | **Organization Name** | **Address** | **Contact Name / Title** | **Phone / Email** |
| **MassHire Workforce Board\*** |  |  |  |  |
| **MassHire Career Center\*** |  |  |  |  |
| **MassHire Workforce Board\*** |  |  |  |  |
| **MassHire Career Center\*** |  |  |  |  |
| **MassHire Workforce Board\*** |  |  |  |  |
| **MassHire Career Center\*** |  |  |  |  |
| **Example: Training Provider, Community -Based Org.** |  |  |  |  |
| **Example: regional employer** |  |  |  |  |

Part 2: Partnership Narrative Form

Please describe your project by responding to the questions below. Please use a font size no smaller than size 11 and margins no less than one inch. The page limit for the Narrative Form is 5 pages. Tables, charts, figures, and appendices are included in the page limit. The page limit does not include the other required parts of the grant application Package.

1. ***Regional Partnership Staffing, Engagement, and Track Record***

Please describe the partnership you’ve established for this proposal, including the following:

1. Describe the role of each partner in the partnership and demonstrate that collectively, the partners, including the lead applicant, have the required experience, capacity and expertise to accomplish the goals of this Phase One proposal.
2. Describe the proposed management and governance structure of the partnership.
3. What have you already worked on as a partnership to advance healthcare workforce work within your region?
4. What have you learned from previous partnership activities that will be incorporated into this proposal?
5. Please clearly indicate which specialized positions, if any, will need to be hired to fulfill the goals of this proposal.
6. How will you define success for your partnership?
7. How will you document and apply what you learn from this project for application to other sectors in your region?
8. Describe which employers you have existing working relationships with and that you might engage in Phase One in order to prepare for Phase Two.
9. ***Regional Planning and Capacity Building Activities***

Please describe your intended use of regional planning and capacity building funds, including:

1. We know that there are existing and emerging needs within the healthcare system. Understanding that, in general, the healthcare sector has dramatic needs right now and needs we might not have anticipated three months ago, and therefore were not included in your original regional blueprint, we are interested in better understanding the needs of your employer partners.

Please describe below your major healthcare workforce challenges as informed by current labor market research, conservations with employers, existing training programs, and other means. We are looking to learn about at least two challenges that can be either broad or narrow in scope. *In providing this description, please indicate which challenges are new and which are part of your current regional blueprint.*

1. What are your primary strategies for addressing these problems? How will your proposed strategy help to address these problems?
2. What regional assets do you seek to engage through this work? This may include existing training providers and other community-based organizations.
3. Describe any barriers you anticipate encountering and explain how you might address them. This can include concerns you may have about the collaborative process.
4. Describe how you will monitor and evaluate your progress, including how your partnership will document and apply what you learn from this project for application to other sectors in your region?

Part 3: Proposal Workplan

Please complete the work plan below for your proposed planning, capacity building or other system change activities. Please be as detailed as possible and list the activities in the order in which they will occur. If you have multiple strategies to address your problem, please segment your activities or add rows as needed.

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| **Activity** | **Date to be accomplished (Month/Year)** | **Person(s) responsible** | **Outcome or Deliverable** |
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Part 4a, 4b & 4c: Budget, Budget Narrative & Match Contribution Forms

**General Instructions:** The proposed budget must be submitted using the following attachments provided in MS Excel file format:

1. Budget Form (Part 4a)
2. Budget Request Narrative Form (Part 4b)
3. Match Contribution Narrative Form (Part 4c)

***Budget Form (Part 4a):*** serves as a cover sheet to the Budget Request Narrative and Match Contribution Forms. While it is formatted with formulas, please check all amounts for accuracy prior to submission.

***Budget Request Narrative Form (Part 4b):*** outlines all the project costs for which you are requesting grant funds. This budget should be based upon the entire requested grant duration (up to two years).

Each line item amount should have clear and sufficient cost rationale. Applicants must complete the following columns for each line item for which they are requesting funds.

* ***Actual Cost (AC) or Cost Allocation (CA):*** Please identify whether these expenses will be charged based upon actual costs or a cost allocation plan.

**Please note:** Applicants awarded funding may be required to provide a copy of their cost allocation plan during contract negotiations. If the cost allocation plan does not include sufficient detail or is updated on a monthly or ongoing basis, this updated information must be included along with other required back-up as specified by the contract terms. Any changes to this plan must be submitted to Commonwealth Corporation for the duration of the grant.

* ***Description of use of funds:*** Please include a description to explain how funds will be used.
* ***Calculations:*** To reduce calculation errors, please use these two columns to include the rate and unit of measurement used to calculate each line item. Instructions for specific line items are included below in the Category Instructions. Applicants may include additional detail in the ***description of use of funds*** column to explain any expenses that do not conform to the standard unit of measurement @ rate calculation format.

***Match Contribution Form (Part 4c):*** following the same format and process as the Budget Request Narrative Form, the Match Contribution Form outlines all the project costs that will be funded from other sources. Each match line item amount should have clear and sufficient cost rationale. Awardees will be required to provide a *30% match of total awarded funds*. Match contributions may be cash or in-kind.

Please follow the Category Instructions below for completing the Budget Request Narrative and Match Contribution Forms and remember to *check all amounts* and formulas for accuracy prior to submission.

**Category Instructions**: Budget Request Narrative Form

**A. Salary & Fringe**

Salary: This category is for project costs related to staff that will be performing project-related functions and will be on the payroll of the lead applicant only.

The budget should include:

* each staff person (name, if known and job title) on a separate line
* actual rates of pay each staff person will receive for compensation in the column labeled “Rate/hour”
* the quantity of hours each staff person will work on this grant in the column labeled “hours”

Grantees may not invoice Commonwealth Corporation for staff roles that are not included on the budget in the contract. Grantees may charge a higher hourly rate than the rates listed in the budget in the contract. However, grantees are responsible for ensuring that the staffing structure outlined in the contract is maintained. Commonwealth Corporation will not approve a modification to add additional funds to staffing in order for the grantee to maintain the staffing structure included in the contract. Therefore, we encourage all grantees to review any significant staff changes with Commonwealth Corporation prior to making the change to ensure an adequate staffing structure is maintained. Applicants should factor in any proposed increases over the grant period into the average hourly rate.

Fringe: This line item is for fringe benefits for internal staff. The budget should include the percentage used to calculate the actual budgeted dollar amount. The budget should also include details about the benefits included in rate and the rate associated with each benefit.

**B.** **Other Program Costs**

Travel:This category is forlead applicantstaff travel required to achieve the project goals. The budget should include a description indicating the need for the proposed travel, destinations, and mode of travel. The budget should include the mileage rate in the column labeled “rate” and the total number of miles in the column labeled “unit.” Mileage will not be reimbursed beyond the current federally approved rates.

Space Rental**:** This category is for space rental related to project activity. If funds will be allocated on a cost allocation basis, the average monthly cost should be included in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.” If costs will be charged on an actual cost basis the actual monthly cost of rent should be included in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.”

Telephone & Communications**:** This category is for telephone and other communication costs related to project activity. If funds will be allocated on a cost allocation basis, the average monthly cost should be included in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.” If costs will be charged on an actual cost basis the budget should include the actual monthly cost of telephone & communications in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.”

Equipment Rental & Lease**:** This category is for rental or lease of office equipment necessary for implementation of the project. The budget should include a list of items to be leased. If funds will be allocated on a cost allocation basis, the average monthly cost should be included in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.” If costs will be charged on an actual cost basis include the actual monthly cost of equipment rentals in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.”

Equipment Purchase**:** This category is for equipment purchases. The budget should include a list of items to be purchased. The budget should include the cost of the item in the column labeled “rate” and the total number of units that will be purchased in the column labeled “unit.”

Postage & Mailings**:** This category is for postage and mailing related to project activity. The budget should include a description of the use of these funds. If funds will be allocated on a cost allocation basis, the budget should include an average monthly cost in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.” If costs will be charged on an actual cost basis over the duration of the grant, the budget should include the total cost of postage in the column labeled “rate” and fill in a number “1” in the column labeled “unit.”

Publication/Print/Copying**:** This category is for publication, printing and copying related to project activity. The budget should include a description of the use of these funds. If funds will be allocated on a cost allocation basis, include an average monthly cost in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.” If costs will be allocated on an actual cost basis over the duration of the grant, include the total cost of publication, printing and copying in the column labeled “rate” and fill in a number “1” in the column labeled “unit.”

Meeting Expenses**:** This category is for meeting expenses related to project activity. The budget should include a description of the use of these funds. The budget should include a meeting cost rate in the column labeled “rate” and the total number of meetings that will be held over the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.”

Office Supplies & Materials**:** This category is for office supplies related to project activity. The budget should include a description of use of these funds. If funds will be allocated on a cost allocation basis, the budget should include an average monthly cost in the column labeled “rate” and the duration of your grant in the column labeled “unit.” If costs will be charged on an actual cost basis over the duration of the grant, the budget should include the total cost of office supplies & materials in the column labeled “rate” and fill in a number “1” in the column labeled “unit.”

Marketing & Advertising**:** This category is for marketing and advertising related to project activity.

The budget should include a description of use of these funds. The budget should include the cost of the advertisement in the column labeled “rate” and the number of times you plan to run the advertisement in the column labeled “unit.”

Training Materials**:** This category is for expenses related to the purchase of training materials related to project activity. The budget should include a description of the training materials. The budget should include the cost per unit of the training materials in the column labeled “rate” and the cost per unit in the column labeled “unit.”

**C. Contracted Services**

Training Contractors: This category is for project costs related to training services provided to the grantee on a contract basis by individuals, organizations or companies that are subcontractors or consultants to the grantee. This may include costs for training program development that are not classified as curriculum development as described below.

If the cost of the course is negotiated at an hourly rate, the budget should include the hourly rate in the column labeled “rate” and the total number of instructional and preparation hours in the column labeled “unit.” If the cost of the course is negotiated at a course-based rate, the budget should include the total cost of the course in the column labeled “unit” and the number of times the course will be offered in the column labeled “rate.” If rates vary by course, each course should be listed in a separate row. At a minimum each training provider should be listed on a separate line.

Curriculum Development Contractors: This category is for project costs related to the development of curricula. The budget should include a description of the use of funds including the name of the organization or individual that will be contracted to develop the curricula and the new courses that will be developed. The budget should include the hourly rate in the column labeled “rate” and the number of hours that will be spent developing the curricula in the column labeled “unit.”

Other Contractors:This category is for expenses related to other contracted services, including any contracted services to fulfill required staffing roles. **For this funding opportunity, partnering workforce boards and career centers will likely be included here.** The budget should include a description of the use of funds including the name of the organization or individual that will be contracted to perform this service. The budget should include the hourly rate in the column labeled “rate” and the quantity of hours each task will require in the column labeled “unit.” Each contractor should be listed on a separate line.

 **D. Indirect Costs** This category is for indirect costs. Indirect costs are costs incurred for common or joint objectives that are not easily identifiable to a single grant and benefit multiple programs. Grantees must apply indirect costs through the use of an approved indirect cost rate or an approved cost allocation plan. A copy of the cost allocation plan must be supplied during contract negotiations. Any changes to this plan must be submitted to Commonwealth Corporation for the duration of the grant.

Part 5: Partnership Agreements

***Memorandum of Agreement or Letter of Commitment*:** Each required MassHire partner\* must demonstrate their commitment to the Phase One process. This must be demonstrated by using the MOA to include these activities or through the submission of separate letters of commitment.We do not mandate a specific format; however, the strongest applications will include clear commitments, outline roles and responsibilities, and articulate a shared stake in the success of the partnership. We are looking for meaningful language that is tailored to the details of the proposal and includes a sufficient level of detail as opposed to a generalizable statement. **See Section Two for more information about required partner commitments.**

\*Please note: this includes all required partners; however, employers or additional partners are not required at this time.

Part 6: Certification

***^This form is required to be attested to digitally on application portal upon submission****.*

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| **Statement of Tax Compliance:**Pursuant to M.G.L., c62C, s.49A, I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, signing on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , certify that under the pains and penalties of perjury that the aforementioned business organization has filed all state tax returns and paid all taxes as required by law. **Certification of Compliance with Filing Requirements:** I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ aforementioned Lead Applicant, certify that said Lead Applicant has filed with the appropriate town or city clerk; or officer of the Commonwealth, and paid any required fees pursuant to the Massachusetts General Laws as regards partnerships and/or corporations doing business in the Commonwealth.**Certification:** I hereby certify that the information provided in this application is accurate and that I am duly authorized/empowered to sign contracts on behalf of this organization. FULL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

1. <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/view-your-regions-blueprint> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)